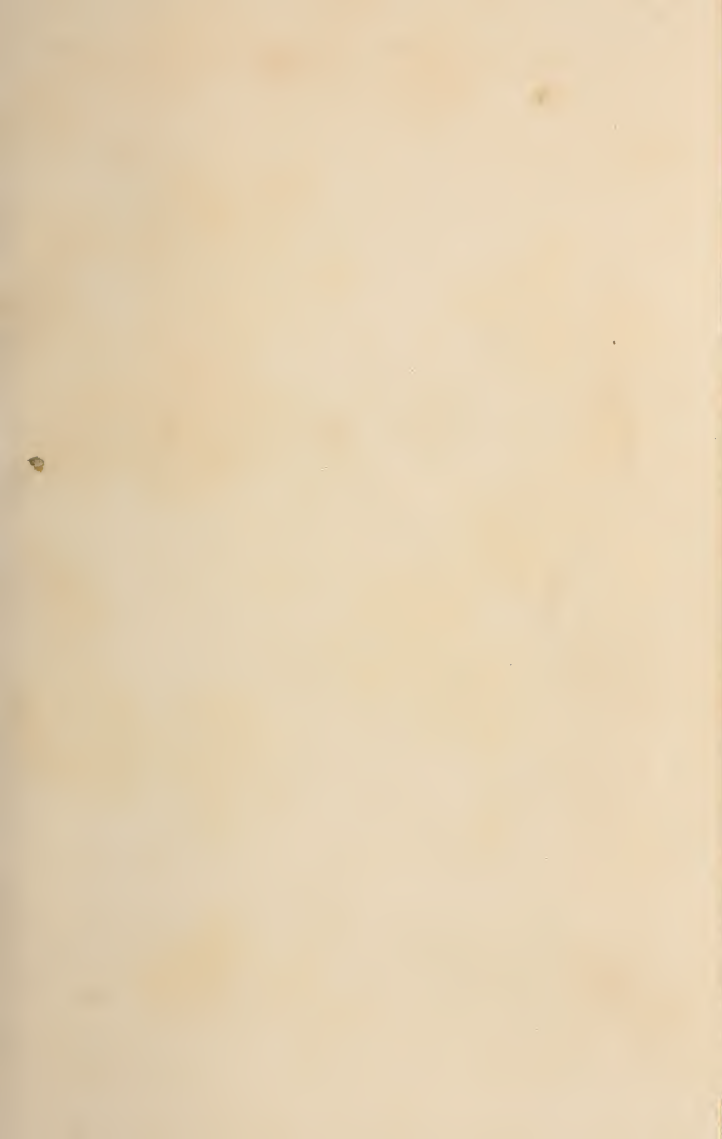




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1756





THE SMALL SHIPS' BELL OF BERWICK.

CHANGES UPON CHURCH BELLS.

BY
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LONDON :

JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.

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CHANGES UPON CHURCH BELLS.

I.

THE ONE BELL OF HERSTMONCEUX.

BELL! Yes. I am the Bell of Herstmonceux. Do not be surprised at my talking. It is nothing new to me: my tongue has been going, off and on, for nearly two hundred years, only people have not understood what I said. And if you can understand my language now, why, I am very glad of it; but it is your gain and not mine. I talk to my friends the neighbouring bells at Wartling and Hailsham, and to the trees, the clouds, and the sea. The wind, too, is my firm ally, and without his help I should often be heard

but a small way. But he is very uncertain, and sometimes almost silences me. This by the way ; it was merely to make you feel that I am not quite so cut off from society and friendship as might at first sight appear. It is to you, however, the public, that I now address myself. All this Christmas ringing and New-Year ringing, in which, from circumstances, I have been unable to join, has somewhat excited me, and I cannot help conversing a little, on the chance of any one's hearing me.

You ask me my parentage. Rather American, to be so inquisitive ; but I'm not particular. Here is my baptismal register, as you may read if you will come and see. "William Hull made me, 1684. Thomas Baker, John Cooper, churchwardens I.H." An honest man was Will Hull, and a pious one, as you may read by his will, dated in the year of his death, three years after my casting. I could tell something about him and his foundry : but I dare say you would not listen to it. I want to tell you something

worth hearing, and besides, at the beginning of the year I don't think we should talk about trifles, and many things good enough in their way are trifles compared with what I am put up here to ring for.

Well, as I couldn't ring for Christmas or New Year, because you see I am a single old bachelor of a bell, I must tell you a story now. Only as I can do nothing but toll, toll, toll, whether merry or sad, it will be only about myself that I speak. (I could tell you why I'm all alone, and how Churchwarden Somebody, if the story is true, sold my fellow-bells to lead the church;—but it may not be true after all.) To go back to the story :—

It was many years ago, a Sunday morning in summer, or autumn, I forget which, when I was ringing away on my one note, calling all the folk to God's house. They came better then than they do now, I can tell you. I called in at the cottage, and at the great house down yonder. It was no use calling at the gate of the poor old castle,

for that was in ruins before the time of which I speak. I called louder than all at the ear and heart of one man that morning, for I knew that he wanted wakening. He had been, for anything I knew, spending Saturday where he had much better not have spent it. Anyhow he was dull and heavy that Lord's-day morning, and in spite of all my entreaties, he put on no Sunday things, and looked no bright Sunday looks, but off he sauntered, after breakfast, down to the wide level, with no one beside him, but ——.

Well, perhaps you would rather I wouldn't say who was beside him, or behind him. He was not the best companion. I can't say I saw him; but that some worse than mortal enemy dogged his steps I have very good reason to believe. Down he stalked among the ditches and the cattle, gloomy and dark to look upon. All the while the people were praying and singing up here, and then when the dear old parson was preaching, there was he on the level, brooding over his past life and his hopeless future, and the more he

thought, the more he felt that the best thing he could do would be to cut it short altogether. And so he planned, or the evil one planned for him, to throw himself into the water and make an end, as he persuaded himself it would be, at once of his life and his troubles.

Afternoon came on, and he lay on the ground, held in the chains of despair, and yet refusing to look up to his Saviour. I called to him louder than ever. The wind helped me, and in an agony of grief, I called him for his soul's sake to come up once more and hear what mercy was in store for him. Long and long he battled. God's Spirit and the good angels came to help him. He left the level, slowly, as an ox going to the slaughter, often stopping on his way toward the church, yet drawn to it as if he could not help it. He came to it as the text was being given out, and, creeping into a corner, heard the single word given out, "AMEN." It was the last of a course of sermons on the Lord's Prayer; and as he

listened, his heart became soft, the old child-spirit which he had hardened by years of sin came back, and in tears of repenting joy he set his seal to the covenant of God, and added his Amen with the earnestness of a ransomed soul.

He lived some years after this; sickness came on him, and he was laid up in the Union, from which he only came out to take a last look at the old church, and to die within sound of my voice. He walked wearily along the low beach-mended road with his two little ones by his side, thanking God that my call had kept his soul from destruction, and after reaching yon cottage across the park, lingered a few weeks, and died in peace. May all of you say and keep to your Amen likewise.

II.

HAILSHAM BASS—HIS STORY.

I SHOULD not have thought of addressing the public, had not I and my fellow-bells been mentioned publicly by our young friend yonder, the Bell of Herstmonceux. I say our *young* friend, because I, and two at least of my comrades, had been swinging and ringing for twenty-one years before he was cast. Still he has almost caught us up in point of age; for we are only two hundred years old, and he is not far short of it.

I can quite confirm what my friend says of Will Hull. He came down to Hailsham as his master's foreman, and a right busy time of it they had down at the Bell Bank, as folks still call the place, though they don't know why they call it so. That was our

birth-place, and many a change has come over farm and town, and men and their ways, since first we learned to ring.

I could have wished our Herstmonceux friend had told some of the old tales about the castle, over which he daily looks. But as he has spoken of modern days, I will remind him of a day in the old times, when he was but four years old, and when I was, as I have said, about five-and-twenty. I am ringing curfew, you must know; and the sexton down below, with his muffler round his neck, little dreams what tales I am telling. Never mind; I only speak to those who hear me, and to those whose ears are closed, it matters not what sounds I utter.

I spoke of old times; but, after all, it is not so very long ago. You remember old Akehurst, who came here regularly every market, till laid up by a fall more than twelve years ago. He would have been ninety-three this Lady-tide. Well, old Akehurst's grandfather was a boy at the time of which I am going to speak. The name was called Acke-

hurst then, and the boy's father, Thomas by name, was churchwarden with Jeremiah Reed and John Rucke, the year we were cast and hung, as you may read to this day on my rim.

King James the Second was then on the throne, and we had all rung merrily on his accession (excepting our middle bell, that is, who has only been with us about one hundred years), as well as tolled for the death of the so-called Merry Monarch, poor Charles II. However, I shall not be considered disloyal, if I confess that every one had been sadly disappointed by the King's conduct, especially during the latter years of his reign. Of course I do not blame him for being a Roman Catholic, thankful as we all were to have done with masses and crucifixes, and to be used for calling people together for a purer form of worship. But King James did not know himself, or the times, or his people. He did things, which wearing the crown gave him no right to do; and after first persecuting all who were not either members of the Church of England or Roman

Catholics, and then suddenly turning round and trying to crush the National Church by favouring those whom he had before oppressed, he ended by finding that all his subjects had lost confidence in him, and were fearing what blow he would strike next at their liberties.

The worthy vicar at that time was one Marinden, of Cambridge. He was one of those clergymen who refused to read in the Church the King's Declaration of Indulgence, a decree changing by his own word and will what had been laid down and established by law. I remember the vestry that was held about it, and what strong words passed before the matter was settled. Thomas Ackehurst supported the vicar, and though the Declaration was all in favour of Dissenters, the minister of the Dicker Chapel was the first to praise the vicar for standing firm to his conscience, and upholding liberty and law.

But I must go back to my story. The refusal to read the Declaration was in June.

Then directly after we rang, and so did the bells all over the country, because the seven Bishops, who were tried for begging the King to stop in his oppressive course, were acquitted in the King's Bench.

It was now the beginning of November, 1688, and things had come to such a pass, that the King's nephew and son-in-law, William, Prince of Orange, had been invited over to save England from tyranny, and become king on a clearer understanding with the people. It was the evening of the 3d of November, dark and drizzly, and few persons were in the streets. Suddenly there was a commotion and a cry of "fire, fire," and many feet began to run to and fro beneath.

The fire was some way off, and no one could make out for a time what it was. Soon we heard the clang of keys in the belfry door down-stairs—then a rush of feet up the ladders, and two or three young men, followed by the boy Bob Ackehurst with a lantern, made their way, and began looking out from the long slit window in the direction

of the fire. It blazed up clear and strong from the direction of Beachy Head, and Bob Ackehurst was right in declaring that it was no farm or dwelling-house, but a beacon or bonfire on the Headland. But then, how had it come there, and how should a bonfire be lighted by mistake two days before the fifth, and the fifth that year on a Sunday?

Bob was also the first to spy another light, which proved to be a beacon-fire on Fairlight Down, away by Hastings, and soon we could hear shouts of "Long live King William," "Down with the Popishers," and such cries, and it was clear that the Dutch fleet had been signalled off Dungeness, and these were bonfires of welcome.

"Now for a ring, boys," cried one of the young men, and at the risk of broken necks they hurried down the ladders for a peal. Bob had barely time to get down before they began full swing, and they kept on half the night through, making us hoarse with ringing, and themselves with shouting too. Old Mr Rucke, the builder, who had been church-

warden in his day, came in and threatened the ringers with my Lord Jeffreys, the Law Tiger, as he was called, who, he said, might come over at any hour from his seat at Chiddingly—though it turned out he was in London. This nearly caused an uproar, but the vicar came in, and while there was a hush for ten minutes in the ringing, he spoke a few grave words that made all in the church feel as they never had felt before.

He said it was a terrible thing for the people of England to be again plunged in civil war, and nothing but the fear of worse dangers still could make them right in putting down one sovereign and setting up another. And then he begged them to kneel, which they did, while he made a short earnest prayer, that the Lord would bring things to an issue without bloodshed, and make all people to serve Him who is "King of kings and Lord of lords."

Then they rang again; but many were busy with their firelocks and their sword-blades, for there was talk of three Irish

regiments at Lewes, who might come next day, and burn and slaughter like savages, with Chief-Justice Jeffreys to hound them on.

Next day, which was Saturday, half the country flocked up to Beachy Head. But many who could not get so far came up into our tower, in hopes of getting a sight of the fleet, over the level, as they sailed down Pevensey Bay. And in the night, when the squadron had rounded Beachy Head, all the ships were lighted up, and made the heavens bright above, so that you could see the glare over the hills from the lighthouse, right away to Seaford.

The only night like that, was what the old weathercock told us about, when the Armada was in the Channel ; but that was before our time.

I'm afraid many good folks didn't get home that night till well into Sunday morning. But Thomas Ackehurst was at church, and his wife and all the family, and Bob seemed to delight in singing the 46th Psalm

as much as if it had been written for that day especially. The vicar's sermon, I think, would have turned King James, or Jeffreys. But there, thank God, you've a Victoria; and may Britain know how to use her liberty when she has got it. So ends my story.

“ God is our refuge and our strength,
In straits a present aid ;
Therefore, although the earth remove,
We will not be afraid :
Though hills amidst the seas be cast ;
Though waters roaring make,
And troubled be ; yea, though the hills
By swelling seas do shake.”

—Ps. xlv. Paraphrase.

III.

THE SMALL SHIP'S BELL OF BERWICK.

I AM a small bell, and I belong to a small place. When I name the place of my residence, some will do me the honour, perhaps, of thinking that I come from Berwick-upon-Tweed. No, it is Berwick in Sussex, where I live, and I should not have thought of addressing the public in any other than my usual tones, had I not caught the echoes of my friend the Bass from Hailsham, borne over the Dicker,* and reminding me of my old days at sea. I have become now so accustomed to the duties of a chaplain on shore, that I seldom think of my former

* A somewhat uncultivated tract, the remains of one of the old Sussex forests. The word "Dicker" means a certain *number* of acres—a thousand, I believe.

roving life ; but now that it has come to my mind, and before the storms of winter have quite passed away, I will say a word or two of my adventures.

The only inscription you will find on me is that of the year of grace in which I was cast, 1781. I was made at the Carron Foundry, and hung soon after on the deck of the *Maid of Perth* of Dundee. She was, for her time, a first-rate brig, and merrily did I ring with my clear young voice the several calls and messages they taught me, as we sailed to and fro between Aberdeen and London, with granite when we came south, and a cargo of perishable goods from the south for the Scotch markets when bound again northward. Then we changed hands and came into the Channel Island trade, and many's the time I've rung a warning note on a foggy night off the Caskets, while the good wives of Guernsey prayed that their husbands might give a wide berth to the hungry rocks, and steer safe and well through the treacherous race of Alderney.

And I had another use at that time, for we had for some years a godly, fearless skipper, who had his men every Sunday, if the weather at all permitted, to keep Church afloat, if they could not keep it ashore. It was a hardship to some, I know, but they mostly fell in with it kindly; and I think, if ever the hard men softened, and the boys grew boy-like and sober, instead of being men and swaggerers, ay, and swearers, before their time, it was on those Lord's days, when they were minded of home and better things.

Then came the war days, and knowing our skipper Morrison, Sir James Saumarez had the *Maid of Perth* chartered for a transport to the Mediterranean. I could tell of Nelson and the Nile, and the landing in Aboukir Bay, of the capture of the *Maid of Perth* by a French frigate, and her recovery three days after with the frigate to boot, by an English corvette, in most gallant style. But my feeling is, that whatever fine things may be written or sung about war, it's a sad trade

after all, and I had rather forget it altogether, and join in ringing in the times of blessed peace, which I hope will one day come over the world.

And this brings me to say how I came to change my position, and from being a ship's bell became a church bell. We were paid off at the Transport Office, Deptford, at least I heard the men talking of it in the river, in 1808, and pleased enough they seemed to be with Captain Young, who settled the business with them—such a gentleman he was, so hearty, and kind, and just. Well, the *Maid of Perth* went down in the world after that, and took to the coal trade, and we began to make long slow voyages from Newcastle to Newhaven, and sometimes to Wall's End, near Pevensey, Seaford, and other places along the coast.

It was in March 1811, as well as I can remember, that we left the Tyne for the last time, bound with coal for Newhaven. The last time;—yes, everything seemed to stand out clear enough afterwards, but there was

nothing very particular about it when we left the quay, to make the hands think anything was going to happen. It was Sunday morning, to be sure, and all the church bells were saying :—

“Ah, remember, Whose the day ;
Will ye linger, will ye stay ?
Trust no morrow ;
Love is bidding, come away !”

and such other calls from earth to heaven as we scatter on the winds Sunday by Sunday. But I rang to tell all hands we were under weigh, and the captain, a fresh one named Short, (Morrison died of fever at Lisbon,) shook hands with a friend, who wished him a good voyage, and the men, who had, I am afraid, been rather too jolly on Saturday evening, began cleaning as they got out of the river, and between swearing at having to be off again so soon, and talking over the spree of the night before, with now and then a word about good luck sailing on a Sunday, we got well out to sea.

Two of the hands I noticed said very little ;

these were the cook-boy, who was nick-named Polly when first he joined, because of his delicate girlish look, but had afterwards shown himself so good a sailor and manly a fellow, that the name was changed to Curly, and a young man from the south, whom they called Nelson.

Curly had been taught by his widowed mother to "remember the Sabbath," and I could see him now and then snatching a look at a little crumpled book of psalms and hymns as he walked across the deck with a kettle or dish in his hand.

Nelson looked out of heart, but that was not to be wondered at, seeing he had just bid good-bye to his sweetheart, a nice-looking quiet sort of girl, who waved a kerchief to him long after we had left the quay.

Curly and Nelson were firm friends. The former had more pluck in speaking out his mind, and sticking to what was right, and this had got him into scrapes enough when he first came on board. Nelson was well-disposed, but afraid to say no. Yet he admired

Curly's courage, and after first standing up for him out of liking for the boy, had come to respect him for his good qualities, and to wish that he were like him. He never said as much, but Curly noticed with pleasure little things that told what his elder companion felt, and whenever he prayed for himself and those at home, he always added a word for dear old Nelson.

The first part of the voyage was fair enough, but off Yarmouth we came in for bad weather,—it was the beginning of the Equinoctials, and at one time we thought we must have put back. We had to throw overboard some few tons of coal, we were so low in the water, and got on better after this. The captain did not know that the *Maid of Perth* had strained her timbers, and only wanted another gale to make her spring a leak. But so it was, and by tacking and tacking, and hugging shore here, and lying to for a couple of days there, we came at last round Dungeness and in sight of Beachy Head.

We thought the gales were all over, and

every one was getting ready for unlading and going ashore. It was Sunday morning again, a month since we sailed. We came in so close to Pevensy that we could hear the bells ringing for church, and Nelson pointed out to Curly the spire under the hills where his village stood, and where he had promised to take his young friend for a day or two's holiday, and to see the old folks, as soon as they could leave the ship at Newhaven.

It was too clear to be safe. The morning, too, had been rosy red, but nobody seemed to expect anything to hurt. A squall came on as we passed Bourne, and Nelson said we ought to keep that side of the Headland. But the captain was tired of being so long on the voyage, and the *Maid* went on for Newhaven.

The storm seemed to wait till we were well round Beachy Head. Indeed for three or four hours the wind blew cold and sleety off shore, and then chopped round and caught us with the full force of a sou'-wester, when we were beating out at sea in a line with Seaford.

Captain Short was a good seaman, and he

did not seem to be afraid of our being driven back upon the cliffs. But in keeping her off from shore, he tried his ship in her weak point: the old strain was renewed, and Curly came running up about four in the morning to say she had sprung a leak. The sea was too high for a boat to live in, and the only boat we had had been in tow since the captain landed in passing for half-an-hour in Bourne, and was now—where?

The only hope was to run for the shore, and try to beach her, if any beach could be found on such a night at the foot of those cold gray cliffs. Ton after ton of coal went overboard, but the water gained in the hold. The lighthouse on Beachy Head told us we must be off Burling Gap. Curly was set to ring me as loud as he could in the hope of waking the attention of the preventive officers, or some of the fishermen on the coast, as our feeble lanthorn at the bows seemed to call forth no answering light from shore.

Very little was spoken, but now and then Nelson said a word to Curly, which showed

that the prayers of the boy had not been altogether in vain. Then came a shock and a crash;—the mainmast went by the board, but still the *Maid of Perth* was afloat. The mast was cut away, and most of the men threw themselves on it as their best chance of life, and were never seen again. "Every man for himself," were the captain's last words. A light on the side of the cliff! and only then did Curly cease ringing. It was too late for him. Nelson was washed overboard while getting out a barrel for his favourite, but being a strong swimmer, and catching a spar, he made his way to land. The captain and one of the hands were saved by ropes.

Curly and I went down together as the *Fair Maid* went to pieces. I had enough timber about me to keep me up, and was drifted ashore, some tides later, with poor little Curly's dead body attached by his tightly-closed fingers to my chain. I was sold with other portions of the wreck to whoever would bid most for me. At that

time my brother bell informs me his three comrades had been sold, and accordingly I was purchased by the rector and churchwardens of this parish, and honoured with a place in their belfry.

I desire to remember with thankfulness my own escape from the fate of the Bells of Bottreaux, of which good old Captain Morrison would talk, when he rang me with his own hand for service.

But, above all, I would that I had a thousand voices to cry in the ears of seamen and landsmen, too, the truths that they hold so cheap. Would that all who hear me might so learn to live that, whether they lie under the green turf of their village churchyard, or far under the swell of the ocean, they might have the same joyful hope of resurrection to life eternal. Especially, I would that the light-hearted boys and girls who play within sound of us up here, and sometimes do worse than play, would follow Curly's example, though I hope they will live longer than he did.

There is a hale old man of between seventy

and eighty, who came one day to have a look at me, with a boy, who must be his grandson. He did not say any name, but by the way he talked, I am sure it must have been Nelson. He had good reason to remember the last voyage he and I made together in the *Maid of Perth*. May he and all his meet Curly above !

IV.

BRIGHTLING OCTAVE.

OFTEN a bright and merry peal we ring, and are favourites all the country round, except, perhaps, with the good folks away towards Robertsbridge, who know when rain is coming by the sound of Brightling bells. But we don't bring them the rain; we only tell them what weather the good Lord is going to send, and bid them praise Him, as we do to our hearts' content, and as we hope to do for many a long year yet to come.

But we don't trouble ourselves much about folks as far off as Robertsbridge. We have a snug berth up here in our sheltered little church, and little enough can we see, and little enough do we care to see, of the big world beyond. We love thinking, too, as

well as talking; and though ready enough to fling our "golden speech" far and wide, when called upon to do so, we never weary of the "silver silence" to which we are so often left. We have the living to think about—the living, who listen to us so often, and to whom we would say, "God speed! so live, that when we toll for you we may sing of peace and hope, and not of sorrow and darkness."

And there are the dead to think of—the dead whom we have chanted to their graves, and the dead of earlier years than our own, whose monuments are on our quiet church walls, or whose tombstones are in the churchyard below. You may fancy, young gay-heart, that a churchyard is a dull place, and that a lively peal like ours might find something more cheerful to talk of than those who are dead and buried. But we have seen and heard more of life than you have, and while we "rejoice with them that do rejoice," we can say, from fifty years' experience—

“It is better to go to the house of mourning,
Than to go to the house of feasting :
For that is the end of all men ;
And the living will lay it to his heart.”

We learned this well enough from our patron, John Fuller, who believed it, though how far he acted on it we know not. Handsome, wealthy, clever, influential, three times in Parliament, and ready with his troop of yeomanry to meet any foe that might land within sight of the Observatory he built up yonder, he was well aware that he must one day lay down all, and content himself with his few yards of earth. He still speaks by his mausoleum, so built by him in his lifetime that he could see its top from his windows above the churchyard wall. Do you lay to heart the words he chose and inscribed on it :—

“The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour ;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

You may see, too, from the brass near the chancel how wealth and godliness have gone

together in the old days, as they often do now. That Mistress Collins, of Sock-nersh, of whom it is said that, "like Mary, she chose that good part, which shall never be taken away from her," was beloved indeed by all. She "fed the poor with food for soul and body," and in a time of mortal sickness she alone, of all who could afford to move, remained still at her post, and sought to relieve the sick, who would otherwise have been left uncared for.

Yonder lies faithful Martha, from the Rectory, busy so many years, not about her own matters, but for those whom she delighted to serve. And there, too, is the grave of another devoted servant, who would be buried in no other spot save at his master's feet. There was no space to let him lie, as most men like to lie, with their feet toward the east, awaiting the resurrection morn; but we doubt not his dust sleeps as quietly with his coffin north and south, as if it were east and west; and when the angel calls, if he served his heavenly Master as

well as he served Master Gregson, he will be ready with the best of them to "receive the reward of the inheritance."

And there is the Ministers' Plot, with the remains of more than one Rector of Brightling, the shepherd beside the sheep of his flock. One is called after forty-six years' tending of the fold, another at the age of thirty-five. Listen, young ministers, to the account of this short summons. He was invited to his Archdeacon's Visitation, and ordered from London a black gown for the occasion. It came too late; but the following year the box was opened, and it was worn. It contained the seeds of small-pox, some of the hands engaged by the maker having not long recovered from that disease. The Rector took it and died. How would he have added yet more warmth to his zeal, and how would his people have listened to him, had they known that that year was his last.

There, too, lie others who once filled the parsonage-house, though but few, of course,

come back to rest near the home of their childhood. One such we welcomed last year, welcomed with a knell, it is true, but yet we rang him *home*. His "dust returned to the earth as it was," but ere that day came, his spirit had come back through Christ to God, its Giver and Father, and so, though it was a day of weeping, it was a day of inner rejoicing. A soldier son of the Rectory he was, and therefore an object of special interest to us. For with all our peaceful chimings, we are true military bells, christened, every one of us, in memory of the Duke and his victories. Two of us bear the title of Waterloo, then come Salamanca, Vittoria, Pyrenees, Orthes, and Toulouse. To these, given by Mr Fuller, the Rector added Tallavera;—so none can wonder at our taking pleasure in ringing a soldier's requiem.

We remember the day when, as an untried lad, Hugh Hayley, left the parsonage gate and started for the voyage to India. We remember how his father charged him to be a good soldier of the cross, as well as a

soldier of his queen. And we know the eyes that were moistened for him, and the prayers that went up for him, within these old church walls, and from the mother's chamber, and from quiet lane and summer evening meadow. And we rejoiced to hear, as years went on, of respect and gallantry and godliness. In India's troublous times he was kept from the hour of peril; and we saw him again in the haunts of his boyhood, a man full-grown and stalwart, but brought low by a season of sickness. Precious days at home were those ere he sailed again for another sojourn under a tropical sun, strong in will, but far from restored in health. Cheerfully he bore up against climate and fatigue as long as nature could endure it; but at last he gave way and was ordered home, the doctor scarcely hoping he could reach England alive.

"Captain," said he to the commander of the home-bound steamer, "you must not be a day after your time; I've an old mother waiting for me in England, and I must see her before I die." He was brought home,

and they nursed him tenderly for a few days, and then in peaceful slumber his soul passed away to heaven. "He was no carpet knight so trim," but a soldier every inch, and as true-hearted a man and Christian as breathed. More than one of his younger companions in arms have been, by his kind influence, saved from the follies of youth, and helped forward in the right and sober way. And strangers have thanked God and his mother since he has gone, for good seed sown, without show or self-righteousness, which has sprung up and borne fruit in its season.

The good folks at home, who think lightly of the village missionary meeting, and pooh-pooh the efforts made for converting the heathen, may know that Hugh Hayley respected and helped the missionaries in every way in his power. Beginning by honouring them for the sake of his father, who had charged him on first going out always to show attention to these servants of God, he ended by supporting them for their own and the work's sake. One missionary specially

remembers the day when he arrived at a particular station, how Captain Hayley invited all the station to meet him and his colleague, and spread for them a banquet, which might have suited the reception of a prince. The host happened in the evening to show his guests a new fur overcoat, just purchased from Cashmere, a really magnificent wrap, and not at all common. The missionary praised the article, went to bed, and forgot all about it.

Next day he and his friend left, grateful for the many kindnesses with which they had been loaded. They had not got ten miles from the station, when they were overtaken by a horseman riding at full speed, and conveying a parcel, which proved to be the identical overcoat, with a note from its owner, saying that he begged the missionary would accept it, as he would need warm clothing in his intended visit to the mountains. Was not this fulfilling John the Baptist's precept? "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none."

Deeds, not words ! that is it ; *deeds, not words*. Let us have not only Sunday worship, but also week-day godliness, week-day uprightness, week-day love. Worshipper, wayfarer, listener, reader, imitate Hugh Hayley ;

“ Go and do thou likewise.”

V.

THE PARSON'S BELL, WARBLETON.

I OWE my existence to our late worthy Rector, Mr Cole. My four companions are nearly a century older than I am, and beg me to tell the world something instead of them. Politeness bids me obey, so I will recall a few of my early impressions, and ask my hearers to go back with me some thirty and odd years ago.

Those were troublous times. People often grumble now, and sigh over the "good old times," as they call them; but they would be happier far if they thanked God for what they have got, and trusted Him for mending in His own good time whatever needs alteration.

It grieves me to hear so many complaints,

and so many loud voices lifted up for change and improvement, every one wanting to have things his own way, and to suit his own interests. Labourers, for instance, are beginning to clamour for an increase of wages, and to threaten strikes, and all that kind of thing, after the example of the misguided folks in the manufacturing districts, if they do not get their way.

A pity honest working-men listen to the speechifying nonsense of those who sow disagreement and ill-will between employer and employed. Depend upon it, fair labour will always fetch a fair price in a free market in the long run, and to weaken the employer, as all force must weaken, is for the labourer to saw from the tree the branch on which he is sitting.

Well, as I was saying, those were troublesome times. The old poor-law certainly was bad, and farmers and labourers both found that a change was needed. The poor-house, built by law in every parish, had not answered its purpose, and the plan of billeting

upon every farmer so many paupers, to be provided with work, whether he liked it or not, was sure to work uncomfortably. Wages, paid half out of the poor-rate, and half by the farmer, could not run smoothly in one stream ; and the money, given by the overseers to whom they thought fit, made far more jealousy than it did good, and stopped charitable people from listening to the cry of distress.

Our own and the neighbouring parishes, of course, felt the commotion, and much restless and bitter feeling was stirred up in consequence. All this was made worse by the mistaken zeal, or knavish folly, of some heady praters, who went up and down the country persuading simple-minded people that now "the good time was coming;" when oppression was to cease, and all men should be on an equal footing, and labour, rewarded according to their notion of its worth, should prove wealth indeed.

Inflamed by these vain politicians, men began to leave their appointed work, and to

troop about in noisy bands, threatening the farmers, if they would not raise the wages, "mocking" the clergy, and warning them that they and their churches would soon be done away with, and trying to show the gentry that it would be bad for them if they did not help on their cause. Many a one now living can remember how such a mob collected at Gardner Street, and marched up to the rectory at Herstmonceux, and how the red-coats came over in double quick-time from Battle to prevent any mischief.

Our good parson, being used to College quiet at Cambridge for a good part of his days, didn't fancy these tumults, and sent his plate up to Marklye, quickly following himself, and remaining there under Squire Darby's protection, till things grew more peaceable. I do believe that the greater part of the mob, who came one day to the Squire's gate, "knew not wherefore they were come together." At any rate, when the master went out and spoke to them a few kindly and sensible words, they turned

away ashamed, and made no further attempt to molest him.

I was, however, about to recall what took place one fine day on Rushlake Green, about the time of which I am speaking. The wind set this way at the time, so we heard all that passed distinctly. Notice had been given that Mr So-and-so, one of these self-chosen reformers, would on that day, at such an hour, address the public, on the unfortunate state of things in general, and the redress of their own grievances in particular! This was a tempting title, and as this was after Easter, and the evenings were lengthening out pleasantly, such a crowd assembled on the Green as has never been seen there before or since.

Farmers went to hear what the fellow had to say about wages, and to find out whether it was true that the upholders of the People's Rights were really for doing away with the tithes, and mending the mistakes of the poor-law; carters and day-labourers knocked off work betimes, and strode in from all the

country for miles around, believing that they were to hear something that would turn them into gentle-folks right off, and do away with the "sweat of the brow," a dear loaf, and all that weighs down the man that follows the plough. Scores of do-nothing idlers flocked in from corners of streets and village ale-houses, to pass an empty hour, and "hooray" any man who had the face to cry down King, Lords, and Parsons.

Women, too, were there, with babies to be half-smothered, or trodden underfoot; giddy girls who had better have been at home, or under their mistress's roof; boys, who had perched themselves upon every tree within reach, just for the "lark" of the thing, and apprentices, good and bad. Some, from that day, were more idle and high-minded than ever, and after joining the "People's Charter" Union, went down in the world they professed to exalt, or have since sobered down into quiet citizens; and some had the sense to go away wiser than they came, and now, though not rich, they are what is better still,

contented, and have the happiness of seeing their children grow up to adorn their station, while they are preparing to leave it for a better one above. Of such, thank God, I know not a few.

I cannot bring myself to repeat all that the orator said, but the burden of it was this, —“The people are under a cruel oligarchy. The laws are made for the few, and against the many. The few have lands and houses, and gold, and silver, and power; while the many have pig-styes to live in, pence to toil for, and must hold their tongues all the while, and utter not a word of their misfortunes.” Then he pointed to the churches, and railed at them and the clergy, and went on to unfold his scheme, which was to turn the parsons adrift, or make them into parish schoolmasters, and use the tithes instead of poor-rates and taxes; and then the employers would be able to give good wages for good labour.

This sounded well, perhaps, to some of his more advanced hearers, but many a sober

man drew in his breath, and asked whither it would lead. Would the labour be good if the labourer were taught to forget his God? and would the country be worth living for if she spared her taxes at the cost of her religion? And would men hold together at this rate any longer than they could see in black and white, that it paid them better to hold by each other, than to cast one another off, and live every man for his own sake alone?

However, the clever talker managed to draw such a pretty picture of what England might become, if only people would trust the like of him to set her to rights, that not a few were ready that moment, to make him Prime Minister, General, King, or Pope, whichever he would like to style himself; and when he reminded them that this necessary agitation, and the machinery by which he and his friends were working the restoration of the country, cost a considerable sum, and that they must be willing to pay something for its support, there was a very

liberal response. Many a farmer put his crown into the hat, and if the pence had not been put into a bag, I think the crown of the hat would have come out.

And now, mark the end. The orator moved a day or two after to Bodle Street Green, where the same game was played over again; and so he went through the country: but of his "improved legislation" nothing has been heard by the multitude on Rushlake Green, and I fancy, that if he had shown his face among them a few months after, he would have become pretty well acquainted with the cooling properties of pond-water.*

Legislation, and improved legislation we have had, and in spite of contention and the evils that loom in the distance, I feel bound to proclaim my belief that the "good time is coming" indeed, sooner or later. Only, we must begin with giving laws to our own hearts, and when, by the grace of God, every man has learned that in obeying Christ his

* This incident is a fact.

King, he has found his end and his happiness, then we shall see God's kingdom upon earth, and shall be ready for the "new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

And while I bid men think chiefly of that blessed state, whate'er it be, which we call heaven, I also hold it my duty and privilege to herald in, if so God will, better days on earth. I will do my best with might and main to

"Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

"Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

VI.

A CHIME FROM CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL.

My companions have asked me to say a word in their name to the public, which, however, I should decline doing, were it not that, while seeking the good of my hearers, I may, perhaps, at this particular season, serve our good cathedral and its spire, which we long to see restored.

I should have preferred getting my senior, Bell No. 3, to address you, my listening friends, but he refuses to say one word more or less than the motto inscribed upon his rim. It is a good motto, and it contains many a sermon: "*Give thanks to God.*" Yes, I don't wonder he is content with repeating that, and that only, as his one message to mankind.

I, too, have a good message for my text, engraven upon me at my christening: "*Be meek and lowly to hear the Word of God.*" Not far short of three hundred years have I been sounding this precept in the ears of the generations who have passed beneath me.

And each year, as it has rolled by, has convinced me that this is wisdom—in meekness and lowliness to hear the Word of God—to hear it as taught at the mother's knee, as read from the Scriptures, as expounded from the pulpit, as breathed in the wind, as chanted by the birds, as thundered in the storm, as whispered by the conscience, as slowly uttered by the voice of sickness, and echoed by every wail of distress, as well as by every carol of joy; and, above all, as gathered up into perfect form and substance in the person of Him who is above all things and all sayings beside, *The Word of the Most High God*, who, being Meekness and Lowliness itself, is the great Power of the universe, and shall yet, through this might of His meekness, "inherit the earth."

The first year of my cathedral life was the eventful one of 1587. It was in the February of that year that poor Mary Queen of Scots had to bow low upon the scaffold at the decree of the stern Elizabeth. I do believe the unfortunate princess listened in her declining days to the humbling Word of God with a meekness she refused to show in the days of her youth and prosperity.

I wonder whether it would have come to that sad, sad end, had she earlier taken up the yoke to which she was called. Child-widow as she was, when yonder Channel brought her back from France, she was, indeed, to be pitied; and it needed a humble spirit and a pure eye to enable so young and fair a creature to tread the slippery paths of admiration and flattery. Well, old John Knox was a rough counsellor, perhaps, and not gentle enough for court ears, but his wounds were the "faithful wounds" of a friend, and I doubt if he was more hard than John Baptist. Perhaps his fiery words came home to Mary Stuart's wavering heart in the

hours of darkness and death, and did their work of healing ere it was too late.

Then, in the July of that same year, 1587, I witnessed the wholesome humbling of the Queen and people, when the mighty Spanish Armada drew near our shores. Faithfully sounded the word of exhortation down our cathedral aisles, and from every pulpit in the kingdom, bidding high and low abase themselves, and draw nigh unto God in supplication. Then came the night of pealing bells and leaping watch-fires, as the tidings of the enemy's approach flew along the coast eastward from Plymouth to Beachy Head, and from Beachy Head to London.

A few short days, and then the invincible Armada, after being pretty well broken by our lighter English ships off Portland, slowly coasted by for Calais, pursued and attacked the whole way by the British "morrisdancers," as they called our active craft.

And within the month we were ringing a thanksgiving for the crowning providence which had caused the winds to blow upon

the remnant, and scattered them in confusion upon our shores. With all her Tudor pride, Queen Bess was "meek and lowly" in sincerity when she met her lords and people in St Paul's, and when the service of praise was over, out of her own royal mouth made many "good speeches" upon the occasion.

Hers, too, was a perilous position, as ever woman held, and one which could not but foster all that was proud and overbearing in her character. Perhaps it was the feeling that prosperity and power had made her hard and selfish toward others, that made her long for more time to amend, and cry on her dying couch, "Millions of money for one inch of time."

I might tell of statesmen and gentlemen in those times who needed heavy strokes to make them stoop, who made quick fortunes by scouring Spanish seas, lost them as quickly, and died in poverty unnoticed; or who climbed the ladder of fame and ambition only to fall from the top, and become the warning of posterity.

And many a tale of quiet home-life could I relate, passed beneath the shadows of our towers, or of faithful ministerial duty, fed within our cloister walls, or of anxious watching over the truth by chief shepherds who have presided in our cathedral. Many a one whom I could name, of every walk in life, has been "meek and lowly to hear the Word of God."

But I feel we have received a lesson ourselves. Perchance we needed humbling. Our fair spire so long had lifted its heavenward finger three hundred feet above our roof, the pride of the county, and the welcome landmark of the mariner, that it may be we were forgetting whence comes the greatness, and whose should be the glory. I pray we may learn ourselves the moral we would teach to others.

I seem to "hear the word" spoken to us through the calamity which has deprived us of our noblest ornament;—"The Day of the Lord shall be upon every one that is exalted: yet a day, not of wrath, but of mercy, if the

chastening be received with lowliness ; a day that shall dawn with clouds, but shall brighten into a perfect noon."

And mercy has been mingled with our judgment ; for no injury was done to the remainder of our goodly edifice, and not a single life was lost when that towering pile fell in. Neither has the voice of prayer and praise been silenced in the vaulted nave, nor have our appointed chimes been interrupted by ruin or by repair.

For myself, I could wish to be hushed in the natural silence of age. My days must be well-nigh run, and this, for aught I know, may, like the swan's, be my departing song. Howe'er this be, I must not shrink from my responsibility. To all once more I say, "Be meek and lowly to hear the Word of God." You, reverend fathers, the spires and pillars of our Church, you have troublous times before you, and many are set upon your falling. "Hear the Word of God" in the din and clamour through which you have to make your way, and mind not what falls to

the ground, so that the kingdom of meekness and lowliness really advances in the world. And you, ye people of England, think not scorn of that pleasant fabric, which your forefathers reared in your midst, the National Church of our island. Beware, lest in casting her off, you put your God further from you than ever. Though she fall, may she be raised again, and, being built upon the one foundation, grow up a more spiritual temple than heretofore.

And while I would thus hear God's voice in our misfortune, I will not shrink from saying, in conclusion, that our Cathedral yet waits to be fully restored. God forbid it should be left in desolation, when there needs but a spirit of energy and goodwill once more to replace it in its position. Shall hundreds be subscribed for a horse-race, or spent upon a pleasure-yacht, while the mother-church of sea-bordered Sussex is shorn of her brightest glory? Shall vessel after vessel go bravely down our Channel, forgetful of the farewell greeting once given by our vane? And shall

voyage after voyage of homeward-bound seafarers close in peace and affluence, without so much as a shilling's thank-offering for rounding Beachy Head in safety? Landsmen have done their part liberally; the county has contributed its share. Will not the sea give a tenth of the cost, or the fortieth part which yet remains?

Sailors, fishermen, captains, passengers, pilots, ship-owners, to you I make an appeal. What if next time you sailed up or down Channel, instead of smooth-downed Sussex you should find yourselves on rocky Cornwall? If, instead of hearing my mate's pious refrain over the waters, "Give, give thanks to God," or my own call to lowliness of heart, your bark should founder beneath the green gurgling waters, and, in the swirl of the waves as you go down, the last sound you distinguish be the ringing of the bells of Bottreaux?

You have heard how they were sunk in sight of shore, with the ship that was bearing them to their destination. And there, it is

said, they lie, and ring under the swell of the ocean. These are the echoes they utter; ponder them well while there is time, and leave not any good work till it be too late.

1st Bell.—"I to the church the living call,
And to the grave I summon all."

2d Bell.—"We sisters three called shall be,
Faith and Hope, and Charity."

3d Bell.—"Take time in time, while life shall last,
For time's not time when time is past."

VII.

PEVENSEY BELL AND CASTLE.

MANY a tale can I tell of the gray old castle, whose ruins look down upon our little church. Not indeed from my own memory, for that does not go back very far; but I have picked up a great deal from the antiquarians who are about here so often, and from other sources besides, which are not open to them. As the tourist said in my hearing the other day (though I am sure he was quoting from some one else): "*There comes a voice that wakes my soul. It is the voice of years that are gone; they roll before me with their deeds.*"

And of so many voices it is hard to pick out one on which to dwell, while I lay the rest to sleep. Kings, bishops, lords, and generals, all seem striving to be heard. Ah! I will

dispose of them : they are all courtly gentlemen, and when I tell them that a lady is waiting to be heard, and that I request attention for her story, I know they will hush their clamour in a moment, and give her all the honour she deserves.

Well, Lady Pelham was the wife of Sir John Pelham, who was made Constable of Pevensey Castle, between 400 and 500 years ago, by its owner, John of Gaunt, the old Duke of Lancaster. I have a kindly feeling towards John of Gaunt, who, with all his faults, spoke out bravely and acted truly for Wyckliffe, the blessed Reformer, and the poor, persecuted Lollards. These were mistaken in many respects, I allow ; but they were feeling after God, and were far beyond their time. Many of the retainers at the castle in those days belonged to the Lollards, and when the duke built the chapel, the foundations of the outer wall and chancel of which you may still trace under the turf within the castle enclosure, there was often a good round Lollard sermon preached by the priest from its pulpit,

and the Lollard hymns sung there on Sundays and Saints'-days were hummed over and over again during the week by the sentry at the castle gate, and the 'maid in my lady's bower.

I am not going to give a whole history, or I should go on to tell how John of Gaunt's son, Henry of Bolingbroke, was banished by his young and weak-minded cousin King Richard the Second, and how Master Pelham (for he was not made Sir John then) went to France with King Richard, and left the castle in charge of his attorneys, John Collebrond, of Boreham, John Sawyer, of Pevensey, and John Master, of Westham.

To make a long story short, people grew sadly discontented with King Richard, and were most of them glad enough to see Henry of Bolingbroke, John of Gaunt's son, land with an army, to make himself king instead. John Pelham had to choose between the new and the old master, and he chose the old one.

Henry the Fourth, as he styled himself,

was very glad to receive Pelham, and made him a Baronet. Sir John joined Henry's army, and landed in Yorkshire to fight against Richard, leaving Pevensey Castle meanwhile in charge of his gallant lady. She soon found herself besieged by a large army of Richard's supporters, who did all they could to get so strong a castle for their royal master. At this distance of time we can admire both sides: Lady Pelham, for putting forth all her strength to keep the stronghold entrusted to her by her absent lord, (who, in his turn, considered it still rightly belonged to the family of his old patron, the Duke of Lancaster); and the good men of Sussex, Surrey, and Kent, who stood fast by the falling standard of Richard, and, in spite of his weakness and follies, upheld his claim to the throne. Passing by the question who was right, and who was wrong, none can fail to do justice to my Lady Pelham, as shown in her letter to Sir John. I am sure the good bailiff of Pevensey will get a copy of the original letter for the benefit of those who care to hear it.

COPY OF LETTER FROM LADY PELHAM TO
HER HUSBAND.*

" July 15, 1399.

"MY DEAR LORD,—I recommend me to your high Lordship with heart and body, and all my poor might, and with all this I thank you, as my dear Lord, dearest and best beloved of all earthly Lords—I say for me, and thank you, my dear Lord, of your comfortable letter that ye sent me from Pontefract, that came to me on Mary Magdalen Day ; for by my troth, I was never so glad as when I heard by your letter, that ye were strong enough with the grace of God for to keep you from the malice of your enemies.

" And, dear Lord, if it like to your high Lordship, that as soon as ye might, that I might hear of your gracious speed, which God Almighty continue and increase ! And, my dear Lord, if it like you for to know of my fare, I am hereby laid in a manner of a

* The spelling has been altered to suit modern forms of speech.

siege, with the County of Sussex, Surrey, and a great parcel of Kent, so that I 'nee may nocht out' (neither may get anything out (?)), nor none victuals get me, but with much hard. Wherefore, my dear, if it like you, by the advice of your wise counsel, for to set remedy of the salvation of your castle, and withstand of the malice of the shires afore-said! And also that ye be fully informed of these great malice-workers in these shires which they have so despitefully wrote to you, and to your castle, and to your men, and to your tenants: for this country have they wasted for a great while. Farewell, my dear Lord: the Holy Trinity you keep from your enemies, and soon send me good tidings of you.

“Written at Pevensey, in the Castle, on St. Jacob (*i.e.* St. James's), Day last past,

“By your own poor J. PELHAM.”

(Addressed)

“TO MY TRUE LORD.”

There, now, I think that is a pattern of a brave, God-fearing, wifely letter, her husband first, herself last, and only so much of herself as it was necessary to mention for the sake of her lord's interests, and, above all, *God over all*. I think Sir John must have felt his heart glow when he read this despatch from the Lady Commandante of his beleaguered castle, and he must always have felt that to her he owed its security. What could King Henry the Fourth do better than grant to Sir John Pelham and his heirs, as he did, "the office of Constable of the Castle of Pevensey, with the Honor of the Eagle, and the lands and rights thereto belonging."

One word about the "Honor of the Eagle." This is a very old title belonging to the barony of Pevensey. It was bestowed upon it by a Norman Lord, Gilbert de Aquila, who received the castle and lands as a present from King Henry the First, about forty years after William the Conqueror's landing. The family took the surname De Aquila, because, while their castle was building, an eagle, (in

Latin, *Aquila*), came and built its nest in an oak-tree near. Hence the holders of Pevensey have ever since been called "Lords of the Eagle." A fine name for warriors ; and I doubt not Lady Pelham might well be called "Lady of the Eagle ;" but when she signs herself at the end "Your own poor J. (I dare say, Jane, or Joan) Pelham," I think it sounds as if she had some little right also to be called the Lady of the Dove. I hope she knew something more about the Holy Trinity, than using their name in a prayer. I hope she had learned something from the teaching of that Holy Spirit, who descended like a dove upon Him, who had the spirit of the one bird, tempered with that of the other.

And this makes me think that all the people of Christ throughout the world, and each body of them in particular, are like the gallant lady in her besieged castle. They are hard beset by foes more full of malice and of might than those of flesh and blood ; their dear Lord is absent, and they can only do their best to hold the post he has entrusted

them, and *let Him know their case*. The more they think of His honour, and strive for His glory, the less will they feel their own difficulties, and fear their own perils. And soon, according to His reckoning, though it may seem long to our impatience, He will come and share with them His glory, and all the fruits of His victories. Even now, in the thickest of the fight, "as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people, from henceforth even for ever," (Ps. cxxv. 2.) And if we are distracted about nothing, "but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make our requests known unto God," then (Phil. iv. 7), "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall *keep* (the word means, *keep as with a garrison of armed men*), our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

VIII.

THE SANCTUS BELL, BATTLE—A TOLL FOR 14TH
OCTOBER 1866, THE 800TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

By the Dean's leave I am to say a few words upon what happened near the spot where I now stand, just eight hundred years ago, that is, in this same month of October, not 1866, but 1066. I wish the old Abbey Church itself were standing in its beauty, and that its own rich bells could ring you forth the story of the Battle of Hastings, in honour of which those now ruined arches were reared. But as this may not be, I will do my best to supply their place, as the church to which we belong supplies the place of the Abbey Church. So to begin:—

On New Year's day, 1066, the people of

England were in a strange and difficult position. Edward the Confessor, the last of their Saxon Kings, had long been feeble from old age, and was now on his death-bed. He was called the Confessor, because with all his faults—and as a king he had a great many—he was never ashamed of his religion. Indeed the only thing to be regretted in him was that he took a half-view of religion, which led him to give up too much time to praying, and reading, and confessing his sins, while the government of his kingdom was left to foreigners and favourites, who thought more of their own profit and pleasure, than of the honour of God and the good of the English people. In this Edward the Confessor was unlike his forefather, Alfred the Great, who learned how to serve, honour, and worship God and His Christ, with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength, and yet fought the battles of his countrymen right nobly, and gave them good laws and customs, which remain to this very day.

But poor Edward's father had been a foolish

and faithless king, and had been driven away at last to his wife's country of Normandy. Here young Edward had grown up amongst priests and monks, whose company he liked best, and also with proud nobles and warriors, whom he did not like at all. The proudest and most clever of these was Edward's own cousin William, son of his mother's brother, Duke Robert of Normandy. It was true they were like brothers; but William, though younger, always took the lead, and got his cousin to promise* that, if ever he should become King of England, he would make him his heir. And, in time, the people of England did send over for Edward to become their king; and though he would have far more enjoyed becoming a "brother" in some quiet Norman monastery, he went over and was crowned, and took his seat on the throne.

During the long years of his reign, the people of this island grew less noble and godly, less fond of their country and of each

* This is William's account.

other, than they had been in earlier times, under Alfred, and his son, and his grandson. The knowledge of Jesus which they possessed had little power on their lives, for they loved sluggish ease and self-enjoyment better than giving themselves up to follow the grand will of God. So they had nothing to bind them together, but were like a bundle of loose sticks ; while the monks, of whom there were enough, and more than enough, in all parts of the country, were very different from Augustine and his followers, and taught the people little of what was good for their souls, or of the useful arts in which they had instructed them. The army was not kept up as it should have been, the forts and walls were allowed to fall into decay, there were few ships to guard the coast, and the sailors were poorly trained in case of their being wanted to serve in them.

And now the time had come when the good but imprudent king must die ; and the Norman Eagle, Duke William, was waiting to swoop down upon the kingdom. There

were two men beside Duke William who had set their hearts upon the crown, and were watching for King Edward's death.

One was the Giant-King of Norway, who had really landed in Yorkshire before the Duke of Normandy could set his foot upon Sussex, and whose defeat and death showed that God could have given victory to the Saxons over the Normans also, had He thought good so to order it.

But Duke William did not trouble himself much about this King of Norway. The only man who really stood between him and the throne of England was Harold, Earl Godwin, whose family was of peasant origin, but who had for some time been chief manager of all the matters of the kingdom.

William was very jealous of Harold. Besides being manly and king-like in countenance and bearing, he was bold, generous, and skilful, in matters both of peace and war, and he reigned already, without any ambitious plotting for power, in the hearts of his Saxon countrymen. It was said, too,

that Edward the Confessor named Harold as his heir to the crown, while lying on his death-bed, and most likely this was the case. Whether Edward really did make two promises, one to William and one to Harold, we shall never exactly know ; but he seems to have left the matter in a dangerous state of uncertainty, especially considering something that had happened within the last year or two, about which I am now going to tell you.

Earl Harold, against King Edward's wish, paid a visit to Normandy, which is, as you know, on the northern shore of France, yonder across the channel, just too far to be seen with the glass, even from Brightling Observatory. Harold's ship was wrecked upon the French coast, and, after many troubles, he fell into Duke William's hands, a prisoner instead of a guest.

William could have danced for joy to find the very man, whom he most hated, thus put unexpectedly into his hands. He was, however, far too cunning to show this ; he made

every pretence of outward friendship, and treated him as a noble visitor ; but he gradually drew him closer and closer into the snare, and at last brought him to this pass, that he could not escape from Normandy except on one condition, namely, that of swearing to help William to make himself King of England. Now Harold had not that firm trust in God, which would have enabled him to act on that good old French saying, "*Do what is right, come of it what may.*" He first gave his word from weakness, and then clenched it with an oath ; and that oath was by William's trickery made far more binding, according to the false fashion of swearing in those days, than Harold fancied at the time. Thus in the end he got back to England, and though he felt in his heart that he had bound himself to give up all thoughts of accepting the prize which he knew would be offered him, he quickly persuaded himself that, William having treated him unfairly, his forced oath was a matter of trifling importance, and he

found many who cried peace to his conscience.

Still this broken promise made a sore wound in his breast, and when he planted his banner on the hill, where the altar of the Abbey was reared, after hurrying down from Yorkshire, where he had slain the King of Norway, many of his stout-hearted followers, and his two brothers among them, felt they were fighting under a cloud, and begged Harold to keep out of the battle, rather than draw his sword with the curse of perjury upon him. Harold, however, would not hear of this, and drawing up his men within a strong palisade-fence, having a deep trench drawn all across the front of his position, he waited for the enemy to attack him.

You must know that the Normans had already landed at Bulverhithe, between Pevensey and Hastings, and were now divided into three great bands, to drive the Saxons from their stronghold. It was Saturday morning, the fourteenth of October, eight hundred years ago, when the Saxon

and Norman here met in deadly struggle for the soil and dominion of England. The Saxons had passed much of the night in feasting and revelry, draining their great horns of ale and honey-wine round their blazing fires. The Normans had been careful to see that their arms and their horses were ready, and then humbled themselves, at any rate outwardly, before God, making confession to their crowds of priests, and receiving the sacrament "by thousands at a time," in the early dawn of that gray autumn morning.

The Normans crossed the trench, and pressed on towards the Saxon enclosure ; but they were soon beaten back, and like the ebbing tide, their ranks were rolled back in confusion, man and horse being overthrown and driven pell-mell into the trench, never to rise again. Fresh troops, however, came on to the attack, and they were encouraged to the onslaught by the Duke's half-brother Odo, soldier-bishop of Bayeux, who afterwards had Pevensey Castle. He rode on a white horse, with a coat of mail over

his white robes, and, mace in hand, was ever found where most the men needed rallying.

Harold had charged his men to keep together within their entrenchment, the men of Kent, however, according to their ancient rights, being allowed to sally forth and commence the battle. He knew that so long as they did this, the Normans could not dislodge them; for their horses were no good, except in the plain, and whenever a Norman came within reach of a Saxon bill or battle-axe, his life was forfeited forthwith. But the fated hour was come, when the sceptre was to fall from the hand of the Saxon. Harold's Royal Standard, brilliant with gold and jewels, still waved above a free and determined army, when the flight of a single shaft changed the fortune of the nation.

From nine till three o'clock the scales were so evenly balanced, that none could say which way they would turn. The English shielded themselves so skilfully in front from the showers of Norman arrows, that they suffered comparatively little from them.

Now, however, the Normans made a change, and shot their arrows high up into the air, so that they fell on the unprotected heads of their enemies. They feared to look up, or to withdraw their shields from the front, and thus many fell. But even then they would have held their ground had they not been deprived of their leader's command. In an evil moment Harold looked up, and received in his right eye an arrow from a bow "drawn at a venture." He plucked it out, broke it, and threw it away, but his eye was gone, and the pain was intense, so that he leaned his head upon his shield in silent, helpless agony.

The Normans, not knowing their success, planned and carried out a trick, by which Harold himself had but a few days before conquered the Norwegian king in Yorkshire. They pretended that they were beaten, and drew off, enticing the unwary Saxons little by little from their stronghold. No longer having their commander to restrain them, they scattered in pursuit over the field, and

found, too late, when the Normans rallied and turned upon them, that they had fallen into a fatal snare. Then ensued a fearful encounter, a desperate hand-to-hand conflict, the Normans straining every nerve to secure the advantage they had won, the Saxons clinging frantically to their only hope of recovering the position they had too hastily abandoned. The Duke of Normandy himself was well-nigh beaten down from his horse by a famous Saxon wrestler, who struck him a blow on the helmet which made him stagger in his saddle. The Saxon then lightly leaped aside, and ran back among his English comrades; but the Norman lances found him out, and he soon was laid among the slain.

And, alas for poor Harold in his extremity! He remained hard by his banner, defending himself bravely against his assailants after he had recovered somewhat from his wound. But his impetuous followers had lost him the day, and when the rush of Normans came on, mingled with the

scattered Saxons, both he and his gallant brothers were speedily smitten down by unknown hands and stretched among the heap of slain.

Still the English fought on and made the invaders pay dearly for their victory, earning for the slopes, which weltered with the mingled blood of both, the ghastly name of *Sen-lac*, or "Blood-lake," as you, good folk of Battle, witness to this day by the "Upper and Lower Lake," the names of different parts of your town.

What a Sunday morning was that which rose upon the morrow of the battle! In all the village churchyards round, digging of deep graves for bodies that might have no coffins, and must lie afar from the homes of their fathers; clerks and priests comforting the living, and saying prayers for the dead; noble ladies making their way through scenes they never thought to behold, in hopes of fanning the spark of life in some fond bosom, or at least of closing some beloved eye, and securing for some honoured

form the rights of Christian burial; rough leeches torturing poor wounded wights with remedies that were almost more horrible than the wounds themselves; and, worse than all, some hardened ruffians ransacking the corpses for plunder, and making rude jests over the awful work of yesterday. May such a Lord's-day never be seen on Sussex soil again!

And yet, methinks, 'twere well, if on this Sunday, the eight-hundredth anniversary of that great engagement, parson and people should look back and forward, and ponder what steps the nation has made during these centuries towards true greatness, and what are her prospects in the years that are to be. We can afford to confess now that it was good for the English people to change masters, and to endure for a generation or two that iron yoke of their Norman conquerors, under which they were trained for future greatness and solidity. So God brings good out of evil; but where do we stand now, we—the Anglo-Norman race, as we

should call ourselves—of whose prowess, skill, and sageness we are never tired of talking? Have we one common end in view, to glorify God, to be loyal to Christ, our most true Head and Life, to share each other's burdens, and lend of our own good things to those who lack them? Do we prize and enjoy thankfully that system of law and government which Norman-bred barons helped to win for us at Runnymede, or are we too hasty to change and improve, . . . ?

Well, well, well, there are signs of light in the east, and the footsteps of the King of Ages is heard upon the strand. The centuries draw nigh, during which, whether in person upon the earth or not, He shall sway the hearts of mankind, and make righteousness to be the law of the world. But, between this day and that—ah, me! what a gulf, narrow, but deep, yawns out in the thickening darkness, thickening for a troubled space before the break of dawn. Fall on your knees, slumbering worshipper; cast

away your idols, ye devotees of sloth and gluttony, drink, lust, pomp, praise, power, gain, pleasure, or whatever is your god. Put new life into your old faith, and breathe the old spirit into new forms; stand together in the name of Christ, and then wait the worst. You may yet see hostile vessels prowling about your shores, and hear the boom of foreign artillery echoing along your cliffs. Line, militia, volunteers, you will need them all, I trow. But fight under the banner of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and it shall be well.

A CHIME FROM BATTLE BELFRY.

14th October 1866.

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

Addressed to the Sussex and Kent Volunteers.

THE harvest moon rose ruddy o'er the rich and virgin
plain,
But ere the busy farming lads could house the gathered
grain,
The Norman had run riot on our fair South Saxon soil,
With locust swoop devouring all the fruit of English toil.

The fields looked up for pity, but the waning moon slid
past ;

King Harold marked her silently as south he travelled fast,
With flower of Middlesex and Kent, to face and flout the
foe,

By the fourteenth of October, twice four hundred years
ago.

The dying moon waxed pale before the young uncradled
sun,

Just waking over Fairlight Down his bloody course to
run.

The Norman knelt before his priest, a blessing to receive,
Crowning with mass and litany the shrift of yester-eve.

The Saxon snored beside the fire that long had smouldered
out,

In dream still quaffing horns of mead with jest and
wassail bout.

Keener his blade who rose and prayed, than his who
slumbered so,

On that fourteenth of October, twice four hundred years
ago.

Quoth Leofwin to King Harold ; " Now hearken, brother
mine ;

Nor sword avails, nor sceptre, if from Heaven no blessing
shine ;

The Norman oath is on thee, withdraw thee from the
fray ;

But we are quit, and by God's help, our arm shall win
the day."

Quoth Harold : " God forbid ! I may not stand and watch
the strife,
The oath was no free-uttered oath, but forced at risk of
life.
God shall uphold mine honour." But his heart still
whispered, No,
On that fourteenth of October, twice four hundred years
ago.

Now o'er the crest of Standard Hill appear three Norman
bands ;
The third, of Norman chivalry, the Duke himself com-
mands.
Above the sacred banner floats, with benison from
Rome :—
From all such blessing evermore God keep our island
home !
Forth from the van spurred Tallifer, " Roland " his martial
strain,
Aloft he flung his glittering blade, then caught and flung
again ;
While to the sky burst forth the cry " Dex Aie," * at
every throw,
On that fourteenth of October, twice four hundred years
ago.

From nine to three the Norman host with bootless toil
essayed
To force a way within the line of trench and palisade :

* God help (us). The Norman battle-cry.

Like reeds, before the Saxon bills Boulogne's gay lances
shiver,

Vainly on Saxon hides Poitou exhausts her endless
quiver ;

Till high in air, at William's word, they wing their barbed
showers,

A moment o'er the crouching ranks, the hurtling tempest
lowers,

Then downward speed, with hornet sting, those messengers
of woe,

On the fourteenth of October, twice four hundred years
ago.

Then ill it fared with him who dared forward or up to
look ;

To see his men so mocked and mauled, brave Harold ill
might brook ;

One restless glance, and ah ! too well that shaft its errand
knew,

Art, more than mortal, taught the hand that fated string
that drew.

Where now the eye that fondly gazed on Edith's swan-
like grace ?

Where the tall form, like oak in storm, pride of the Saxon
race ?

Better a neat-herd's son remain,* than soar to stoop so
low,

On that fourteenth of October, twice four hundred years
ago.

* Harold's father, Godwin, was a peasant, and had been made an Earl by Canute for his great worth and many services.

What means the lull? a thousand horse came thundering
on amain,

They break, they wheel, they scatter wide, o'er all the
cumbered plain!

“Up, sons of Thor! the day is ours, the cowed invaders flee:
Now leap like lions from your lair, and sweep them to
the sea!”

So rings the war-cry; forth they pour along the treacher-
ous track;

Their leader lives, but blind and faint he may not hold
them back.

By Norman craft the day was won, but not by Norman
bow,

On that fourteenth of October, twice four hundred years
ago.

Too late the Saxon footmen learn their error and its cost,
Waking from flush of victory, to find the battle lost;

Like stags at bay they met the fray, their lives right
dearly sold,

And many a knight consigned to death, and many a baron
bold;

Yet all unequal was the strife; darkness alone could save
The remnant of the Saxon rout; while he, too fond, too
brave,

So mangled lay beneath the slain, his features none might
know,

On that fourteenth of October, twice four hundred years
ago.

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Then let us here a backward glance through all the
centuries cast,
And hush our tongues, and converse hold with that
eventful past,
Which God hath wrought, while men have fought, for
England and her weal,
Nor doubt her peace, in coming years, the self-same hand
shall seal,
If only pride, and selfish ends, and crime that rots her
core,
With all that is of earth alone, be banished from her
shore;
While each and all, if need should call, bid their best life-
blood flow,
As on that great field of Hastings, twice four hundred
years ago.

A SECOND CHIME FROM BATTLE BELFRY.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

EIGHT CENTURIES and one short year to-day
Since Edward's crown to Norman William fell—
How many a dynasty with chequered sway
The world meanwhile hath governed ill or well!
And now who reigns or shall reign none can tell;
Who cries the loudest gains the readiest ear,
Him list the many; bound as by a spell,
Statesmen sit balancing 'twixt hope and fear,
While all the good and true sigh o'er the prospect drear.

How fares the crown from Harold's temple torn?

Long may Her line o'er this our state preside,
Who plains so sadly from her nest forlorn,
Her heir, well-skilled to gauge both wind and tide,
On prosperous swell the sunken reef o'er-ride,
Knowing, as knew his sire, what time to waive
Worn-out prerogative, to silence pride
By might of meekness; when to stand and brave
Faction or fashion's storm, honour not life to save.

But if too strong the opposing current roar,

If adverse winds bear down the labouring bark,
If slow she drift upon the hungry shore,
Or founder helpless 'mid the waters dark,
Yet keep thy post, O man; despair not—hark!
Steals not a tone of hope the moil above?

High o'er the billow floats an unseen ark,
From out whose opening door a strain of love
Breathes forth to each who wills to list the heavenly dove.

Rides too within one all-majestic form,

Who on Tiberias whispered, "Peace, be still!"
And lo! the lake was placid, and the storm
Fled cowering to its cradle on the hill.

Soon shall this final tempest prove His will,
The waves subside, and o'er our planet spread

A sea of knowledge, knowledge that shall fill
All hearts with joy, for earth shall find her Head,
The long-spurned Man of men, "who liveth and was
dead."

Ay, His the sceptre, His the diadem,
From hand to hand, from brow to brow passed on ;
No more 'tis His the thorny wreath to gem
With ruby drop, the mocking robe to don ;
Both reed and purple, gall and spear are gone ;
With them mere earthly pomp hath found its doom
Buried with Sodom, razed with Babylon :
New cities, fair as holy, take their room,
And alleys cursed by sin with Eden fragrance bloom.

O King, my King ! if that I may not live
That day to witness, grant with loyal heart,
I may prepare its coming, freely give
Myself, my all, to fill my destined part,
To plant Thy banner here in field and mart,
By court and cot ; where'er a heart is sad,
There may I prove by loving that *Thou art*,
There "seisin take," scorning nor good nor bad,
Till Thou in darkest hour come to make all things glad.

HASTINGS, 14/h October 1867.

IX.

BISHOPSTONE CURFEW.

THE echoes tell me that an honourable bell somewhere in the east has been giving an account of the landing of the Normans in England, and the defeat of Harold at Hastings. I am situated in the west—in fact, I belong to the shires; but I hope I may be pardoned for saying a few words brought to my mind by the mention of William the Conqueror.

It is to him, as every one knows, that we must trace the custom of ringing the Curfew Bell, which still lingers in some few places throughout the country, and I like keeping up old customs, I confess, unless they are bad customs, and I think we may learn much from looking back to the times in



BISHOPSTONE CURFEW.



which they were brought in, and finding out the reasons for their establishment. I must, however, at the outset, confess that I cannot myself claim the credit of being one of the original Curfew Bells. I ring, it is true, as regular as a clock, between eight and nine in the evening, the dark winter through, and for this stated service I am honoured with the historic title of "The Bishopstone Curfew." But I cannot go back so far as the Conquest. I cannot assign the royal decree as the warrant for my evening proclamation. No ; I am a plain parish bell, and my habit of sounding the curfew arose from a circumstance of private life, and in somewhat modern times. Perhaps you will allow me to relate the circumstance to which I allude.

One moonless winter's night many years ago, the ringers were assembled in the belfry, practising their Christmas chimes, (you might travel far enough before you hear such a peal as ours is), and on that particular night the whole stream of melody, which God has made to dwell in those simple notes of the seven-

toned scale, flowed over the wide Vale of the White Horse; and when the north-westerly breeze began to stir and lifted the sound above the down that looks over the village from the south, the blended harmony swelled far away over the turf-clad Roman road, towards Auburn, Baydon, and Lambourne.

The noise was too deafening in the belfry for the ringers to think much about the music they made, and each man had enough to do beside that to keep his proper time and remember the order of the changes for which our peal was famous. But others heard it and rejoiced in it, the child lying awake in his cot, and the rheumatic grandmother in her chair, the parson in his study, the miller looking out from his lantern-lighted window upon the huge water-wheel that groaned and dripped beneath, the shepherd trudging over the ploughed fallow, and the traveller on the frosty road.

The traveller on the road,—yes, and the traveller somewhere else, too,—to the pedlar tramping along the hard road for Marl-

borough, and with only a mile or two between him and Totterdown, whither he was bound for the night, it was a cheery sound, I daresay, to hear our stout fellows

“Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony.”

A cheery sound, and nothing more, and counting for very little compared with the six shillings and sevenpence halfpenny he had pocketed that afternoon, and the ring of the landlord's pewter by the hearth of the “Shepherd's Rest.” But to the weary wanderer on the broad down, dazed with the darkness, and faint with cold and hunger, it was that and something more; it was a voice of hope, and energy, and life; it was a welcome from the ghost-land of despair to the warm hearts and homes of living hospitable men. Whence that wanderer came, and whither he was bound, what was his name, parentage, and profession, how long he had been walking, and what precisely he thought, feared, or prayed, I cannot make

bold to say. If you ask good Mr. B. at the parsonage, he will let you look into the Register, and you may find there some further particulars than I can afford. But this I know for a certainty, that such a wanderer there was, lost, lost, lost upon the hedgeless, roadless down, at that very hour, thinking himself doomed to spend the night in solitude, perhaps to perish in cold. Some of you may smile as you hear this, and think it was an adventure to be enjoyed. Perhaps you might find it so. But I think, if you

“ Had crossed the down-land at that hour
When men are not most brave ;”

if you had groped your way among the Seven Barrows that lie between Bishopstone and Lambourne, where lie the bones of Saxons and Danes by hundreds ; if you had seen in the distance the spectral forms of the cold gray stones which form the Druidical group known as “ Wayland Smith’s Cave ;” if you had happened to light upon the well, now closed, from which the shep-

herd's bucket could draw no water, but from which the drags brought up the buckled shoe and part of the hose-covered leg of poor Lawyer Isles, of Wanbro', whose son shot him at his desk, and then carted his father's body to this very well near Russley; if you had put one foot over the mouth of an open chalk-pit, of which there are scores on the down, or floundered into one of the numerous ponds which dot the sheep-walk, that stretched at that time almost from the Berkshire border to Salisbury; and if, beside these and other varieties, you were foot-sore, empty-stomached, and numbed with the first three hours of a December frost,—you would perhaps agree that such an adventure would not be the liveliest you could choose, and you might allow that, next to a light in a casement window, the music of the “church-going bell” was the sweetest solace to be desired.

I hope our friend had already drawn comfort from the thought, that there is One to whom “the darkness and the light are

both alike," and that he had "encouraged himself in the Lord his God," as David did in his hour of gloom. But if not,—if he were one unused to pray, untaught to cheer the loneliness by holy psalm or hymn, or treasured word of Jesus, then I do think, at that moment when our chimes rolled over the dull hill-side, his ears must have been touched as with a new sense, and he must have heard us as a message from heaven, bidding him push forward and hope in his Divine Protector.

At any rate the wanderer did push on, and turning not to right or left for bank or ditch, for bush or hollow, he struck out for the place from whence the chimes pealed forth,—for our own tall belfry tower,—and in due time he struck upon a track, which grew firmer and clearer as he went on, till at last he saw the lights of a few late-retiring sleepers. This again spurred him on, as he began to flag, and ere midnight turned he was housed, and warmed, and fed by one of the good Samaritans of Bishopstone.

Nor did he forget his escape, for in a short time a sum of money was made over, in due legal form, to properly appointed trustees, the interest of which should be applied to the paying of a certain sum yearly to the clerk of the Parish Church for tolling one of the church bells for a given space every evening through all the winter months, in case there should be any like wanderers lost upon the pathless downs.

Such is the history of my curfew-ringing. And now I have made such a long story of it, that I have no time left to tell you about the times when the real Curfew was in fashion, when, to keep the towns and villages safe from "fires and robbers," all fires were put out, by law, at eight or nine in the evening, and when ——. No matter, however, if you are satisfied. It concerns us little what went on eight hundred years ago, so long as we live our own little day wisely and well. I will only pray that all who hear me may not lose their way in their darksome passage through life, or that having

lost it, they may hear the precious call flung to them in every breeze, and may come speedily to Him, who is "the Way, and the Truth, and the Life."

X.

THE TALE OF A TAR.

BY ONE OF THE "TRINITY" BRETHREN, WESTBOURNE.

I WONDER if anybody will care to hear anything I have to say. Plenty of ears, to be sure! What crowds of people do come down here in the season! How the place is altered since our church was built, when there were corn-fields all round, and only two or three houses dotted about, and the old row of Sea-houses along by the beach. Well, I suppose Westbourne is improved; yes, I know it is, in many respects. All we want is for hearts and lives to improve, as well as clothes and houses, and then I shall ring with a lighter spirit than I do now on Sundays and Wednesday evenings.

I must remember, though, I am not the

Incumbent of Trinity, and it is incumbent on me to amuse as well as to instruct, or I shall lose the few ears I have now, "altogether quite." Let us take a glance down the Parade, and while you watch the gulls and the "Total Abstinence" boat, and the children on the sands, I will tell you what I have heard about old Hardy yonder, the man in the brown smock, with the short pipe in his mouth, sunning himself on the capstan.

Forty years ago this last October 1867, Hardy was petty officer on board a frigate in the Mediterranean Squadron. They were cruising about the coast of Greece, under command of Sir Edward Codrington, to watch the allied fleets of the Turks and the Egyptians. You must know that, for six years before this, the Greeks had been fighting to get free from the Turks. At last the Russians and English had interfered between them and their oppressors, and agreed to make the Sultan let the Greeks govern themselves, on condition of their paying him a certain sum of money every year, and calling him their Sovereign still.

This the Sultan refused to do ; nor would he agree to let ships of war come into the Black Sea, as the Allies wanted him to do. Instead of this, he collected as many ships and soldiers as he could, to punish the poor Greeks for rising up against him. These were the ships that Hardy and his comrades had now to watch.

The Turks were allowed time, up to a certain day, to consider ; but it was known in the English, Russian, and French fleets, before the time was due, that the Sultan would not agree to their terms. They had, however, made a truce with Ibrahim Pacha, who commanded all the Egyptian forces, and who did not think of any fighting till the day for the Turks to give their answer should have passed. This truce Ibrahim Pacha broke in a very barefaced manner, and accordingly, when the Turkish and Egyptian ships sailed into the harbour of Navarino on the 19th of October 1827, the English and French ships, (I am not sure about the Russian), sailed in after them, wanting to obtain satisfaction. They entered next morning, the 20th.

The mouth of the harbour is only wide enough for two ships to enter abreast, and when Hardy's ship sailed in he saw the enemy's vessels drawn up in a half-moon along the shore, looking ready for action. Codrington, in the flag-ship the *Asia*, anchored close abreast of the Turkish Admiral, or Capidan Bey, as they called him. Our Admiral had twice sent a boat to offer him terms, but he only made a shuffling answer, and let the officer in command of the boat understand that he did not care what they did, and did not believe they had the spirit to fight, after all that they had said about doing so. This was provoking to an Englishman and a sailor; but still Codrington was anxious, if possible, to avoid bloodshed. All the ships, and Hardy's among them, were ordered to take up position, ready for action, with springs on their cables, and Hardy saw Nelson's old order signalled from the *Asia*: "No captain can do very wrong, who places his ship alongside of an enemy."

And now came a pause, silent as death, and full of importance to some who felt what

was at hand. They knew that, while their side might beat, they might not live out the fight, and they thought of home and friends, and some of wives and children, whom they might never see again. Loud and random talkers were now silent and thoughtful, and here and there one turned his thoughts upward, and prayed in spirit for courage and success, or read over, with a new light upon the page, the prayer from the Form to be used at sea: "Stir up Thy strength, O Lord, and come and help us; for Thou givest not alway the battle to the strong, but canst save by many or by few. O let not our sins now cry against us for vengeance; but hear us, Thy poor servants, begging mercy, and imploring Thy help, and that Thou wouldst be a defence unto us against the face of the enemy. Make it appear that Thou art our Saviour and mighty Deliverer, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

The fleet had begun sailing into Navarino harbour at nine in the morning. It was now past noon, and the silence was broken once more by the splash of oars, as Lieu-

tenant Fitzroy, in the *Dartmouth's* gig, crossed the bay with a request that one of the Turkish fireships would give a wider berth than she was then doing to some of her English neighbours. Hardy's quick ear caught the sound of musketry, as the treacherous answer was given from the shrouds at twenty yards' range, and poor Fitzroy and several of his men were shot dead in their boat. The *Dartmouth* and *Syrene* replied with small arms, and a boat put off from the *Rose* to help the gig of the *Dartmouth* in boarding their Turkish enemy. Captain Davis of the *Rose* himself steered his boat, and those who were not wounded in the first boat joined him with a cheer in scaling the bulwarks of the fire-ship. Already the foremost were on the gunwale, when, without a moment's warning, she exploded, and friend and foe were hurled into the air, or dashed back into the water, while spars and splinters, chains and stanchions, flew about, carrying havoc in all directions.

It was an awful moment, and old Tars,

who remembered Trafalgar and the Nile, were not ashamed to wish themselves in open sea, and not in a land-locked harbour, with comrades and enemies all at close quarters together, and the fire-ships ready, at any moment, to sink them all alike. Hardy, however, had no time for looking about him. It was time to serve the guns and deliver a broadside at once, for an Egyptian frigate, with two rows of guns, was just about to rake the ———, and to it they both went. Fine fellows were those brawny Egyptians, with their bare legs and turbans, and desperate work they had with such hand-to-hand fighting. Many a tall mate of Hardy's was carried off to the cock-pit, or heaved overboard with a heavy splash, to clear the deck from such encumbrances, and no time for kindly thought or burial prayer to attend him.

But Hardy stuck to his post, and the only reminder of danger he had in his own person was the scrape of a piece of iron from a canister-shot across the back of his hand. The frigate at last was sunk, and so was a

corvette with which they next engaged. And now the afternoon was wearing on. One by one, the Turkish and Egyptian ships were burnt, sunk, or blown up, till their fire was entirely silenced. As the October twilight came on, the remnants of the crews were seen by the glare of blazing hulks making for the shore in their boats, while, alas ! nothing could be done for their wounded, whom they left to perish with the wrecks.

Thus was fought the Battle of Navarino, and thus Hardy came, scarcely wounded, out of the hot, blind struggle for life. Forty years has he been tossing about at sea since then, or knocking about on shore. There he sits on the capstan, chatting with the lady in the gray cloak, who has given him a tract to read. A good-natured old soul is Hardy, with his merry blue eye, and his crisp gray locks, and you can but wish him well over the last few tides of his life.

And what haven is he making for ? Eh, Hardy ? You are reading the tract, and you say to yourself, It's all very good ; and it

brings to your mind those strong deep words that took hold of you last Friday night, when the lay-preacher spoke so powerfully in the Hall yonder. And how is it all to end? Are you to sit in the sun, and smoke, and chat, and read, and then take your boat out for a fare, and then go to supper and sleep, and up again to-morrow, and pretty much the same thing again, without *coming to the point* about God, and the Lord Jesus, and your soul?

Ah, yes! this is Whitsuntide, indeed. You may say it is the time to be merry, and drink the health of the gentleman that went out fishing with you yesterday. But there is something better than this, and something to do with Whitsuntide too. It says somewhere, "Be not —— ———, *but be filled with the Spirit!*" This is the main thing. Pray for this; labour for this; give up everything for this; and you will have been saved from Navarino for a purpose indeed, even to honour and to live with Jesus for ever and ever.

XI.

A SEQUEL FROM GARTHINGTON.

It is a strange thing, I cannot help thinking, that of all the chimes, merry and sober, which our church-bell friends have been singing, not one of them, to my knowledge, has been the sweet blythe note that tells of a marriage morn. Fancy, a chorus of church peals, and never a wedding madrigal! Well, so much the better for me, for "silence will I none," till I have sung my song of the marriage of Robert Andrews, for which the parish-church bells have been echoing all the morning. True, I am but the bell-of-all-work down at the Chapel of Ease, and you may say I have no business to talk about weddings and such like when I am ringing for afternoon

service. I'm not so sure about that; but as it is not Sunday, and it is St Peter's day, and Saint Peter, I hear, was a married man, I shall just say my say, and let who will gainsay it.

Robert, or Bob Andrews, some eighteen years ago, was a school-boy in the National School at Barford. A nice clean-looking boy was Bob Andrews every day of the week, as he went up the village street with his satchel round his neck, and his little brother Jem beside him. But on Sundays Bob was a sight indeed, with his black jacket, and big turn-down white collar, his blue neck-tie, father's flowered waistcoat cut to fit, and Master Herbert's check trousers from the Hall turned and made as good as new by Dame Andrews' thrifty needle. Then, with his boots blacker than black, his Prayer-book and Testament under his arm, and cotton gloves over his fingers, Bob might have stood for his picture—he would never have dreamed of sitting—as a pattern Sunday-school boy.

“To and thro'” as we say in Sussex, went

Bob Andrews and his brother, and the Rector hoped well of him as he saw him kneeling so quietly, and making the responses in the choir, and the Rector's daughter thought well of him as she heard him say his Collect, and read the verses from his Testament; and Mr Markby the schoolmaster spoke well of him to Mr Cole the inspector, and Mrs Pearson at the shop sighed as he left the counter with the little basket of mother's purchases, exact according to the memorandum, in his own hand, on the inside of an envelope, and wished her own boy Alfred were anything like so promising as steady little Bob Andrews.

And Bob's own mother, what did she think of him? did she feel as hopeful as others? Hopeful she certainly did, and thankful too, that for four years, since his father's death, he had not once caused her pain or anxiety. There could not be a better son, she would say, and her eyes would brim up and run over when any one spoke of his dutifulness. But Widow

Andrews was a sensible woman; she knew her own and she knew Robert's weak points; and she knew that the steady good boys have their rocks and shoals to strike against as well as the rude and naughty ones.

Therefore Mrs Andrews always had a fear to answer the voice of her joy. Her smile was chastened and subdued; and her heart went up unceasingly for her two boys, but specially for Robert the elder, that He, "without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy," would keep him from all temptation, and make him indeed His child.

There was some one else who was a friend of Bob Andrews', and who thought well of him certainly, if she ever thought about him at all, though I rather think Bob was a "fact" to her, and nothing more, all those old school-days when they walked so often "to and thro'," and worked and sang together, and played hop-sotch of an evening. Caroline Short was two years younger than Robert, but in character and mind she was three years older, and that was something,

considering what a steady-going boy Bob was. Caroline was not pretty, but she had a pleasant, cheerful face, and when anything lighted it up, you would quite forget whatever there was of plainness in it. There was never any nonsense between Robert and Caroline; nor was there any "crowning Queen of the May," which might have called out childish compliments or make-believe love: that was not kept up in Barford.

No, no: Bob and Caroline were very good friends, and nothing more, and when Bob left school and began life as carter's boy at the church farm, he had no more thought of caring for Caroline Short than he had of becoming prime minister. And if Caroline missed the amusement she now and then had in taking Bob up at school, and if she sometimes wished she had a brother, and would not have minded his being something like Robert Andrews, pray where was the harm of that? I don't see that there was any.

But changes came on at Barford, as in all the world beside. The bell tolled out for

Caroline's mother, who had pined in secret over a deep sorrow she had concealed from her child—the desertion of an intemperate husband. Caroline went to service, accompanying, for her first place, the schoolmaster and his wife, who were moving away into “the shires.”

And the bells chimed next spring for Widow Andrews' marriage. A distant relation had died and left Mrs Andrews the life interest of three cottages in Barford, from which followed two main results. Bob was taken from the church farm, and bound apprentice to the wheelwright; and his mother, to Robert's amazement and regret, gave her hand, and indeed her heart, to a respectable tradesman in the neighbouring village of Eastham.

This, by the way, was the third and saddest consequence, that his mother's second marriage, suitable and happy as it was in itself, quite estranged him from her and her new home. He took it as a wrong to himself, and brooded over it till he persuaded himself, like Jonah, that “*he did well to be*

angry." Poor Robert! for several years he bolstered himself up in this foolish and unchristian temper. He made excuses for not going to see his mother, and when he wrote, made no allusion whatever to his step-father, who was a kind and Christian man, and spared nothing to help Robert on, and start him in his business as carpenter.

But time passed on. Mrs Dunning was brought down with fever. Robert hurried to her side. A few words of gentle allusion to old days broke the crust of ice that had grown over the son's heart. The mother's prayers were answered: she had feared for him from a child, that he would need humbling before he would come as a child to the cross. That humbling now came in all its blessed fulness, and the death of the mother was the second birth of her son. True love flowed out now to Mr Dunning and Jem, who was assistant and partner, and Robert returned to his business an altered man.

People wondered why Mr Andrews never married: he was such a likely young man, and so well conducted; what a prize he would be.



THE CHAPEL-OF-EASE, GARTHINGTON.

Bob was not yet in spirit to marry: he was at peace, but the cloud was over him still.

Bob, however, joined the Volunteers, and of all the Garthington battery Bob was the smartest and most regular at drill. One evening, on returning from drill, Bob met a neatly-dressed young woman, returning apparently from the Wednesday service at the parish church. Could it be? no,—yes,—it must be. “Caroline,” he exclaimed, with a grasp at her hand; “how are you? where——?”

“You have the advantage over me, sir,” said Caroline, drawing back, and looking surprised and confused: “I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance.”

“What! not remember Bob Andrews?”

What followed, I will not say. Two souls fitted for each other by Him who gave them life, and had drawn them first severally to Himself, had by His providence been once more brought together. Once more there is a Cana, but not in Galilee, only in Garthington, Sussex. May there be many more such! Amen.

XII.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL FOR THE CHILDREN.

I SHALL not say from what belfry I ring. It matters not who or where I am. I only ring a small peal for the little ones. So now, children, listen :—

Christmas eve, and no snow ! Charlie Woodham would not have minded half so much, if there had been a good snow-fall overnight, or even if it were snowing in his face now ; for then he could have had a downright good game with his little brother Albert, and he would have walked up to his knees in the drift, and let the snow-flakes fall on his tongue and melt into cold water, and done a dozen things beside to make that long tiresome walk seem shorter.

So Charlie thought !—but he forgot that if

he was tired, as it was, with walking to Middleton and back, he would have been ever so much more tired after snow-balling and amusing himself with Albert in the drift; he forgot that snow in his sockless boots might make his feet blister more than they were blistering now, or might bring on those troublesome chilblains; he forgot that snow-water is often tasteless, and would not make him feel less hungry than he felt already.

Albert, too, was very provoking. He was two years his younger, and yet he kept up without complaining at all, and it was clear he could have walked on without difficulty, faster than they were going, and could have got home, or to grandmother's, while he was half a mile or more from either.

What could make Albert so much more cheerful than he was? Charlie almost thought his brother kept up on purpose to spite him, or out of rivalry, that he might be able to boast of it, and between vexation at Albert's good humour, and hunger, cold and sore feet, he was ready to lie down and cry,

and he very nearly did say some ugly bad words, which he happily did not understand, but which he had heard the butcher's man say when the beast they had been driving went down South Street instead of West Street, at Middleton.

All this was, no doubt, very wrong in Charlie Woodham, but he had had his patience tried a good deal that day, and altogether things had been very disappointing.

It sounded well enough over-night to hear of helping Master Elson to drive the fat beast from Farmer Thornbury's yard over to the butcher's at Middleton, and he thought he should see Aunt Peacham, and perhaps have a piece of her good lardy-cake before coming back; and at any rate if mother would let him have that penny he had put by in the white mug on the shelf, he would get some sweets at Widow Crayford's. It is due to Charles to say that he also had another and a very good reason for looking forward to that walk to Middleton, and that

is, that he was to have some coppers, how many he did not know, but three he hoped at least, from Farmer Thornbury, for helping Joe Elson to drive the red ox to the butcher's, and these pennies were to be all for father.

Father had knocked off work just a fortnight, and those who knew him and his family shook their heads, and said that poor Tom Woodham would go off just like his brothers, and this was the last Christmas he would live to see. And father's cough was very bad, sure enough, and his club-pay, though a very great blessing indeed, would cover little more than bread, firing, and rent.

With these hopes and prospects Charlie had got up in the morning, and he was so much taken up with the thought of starting at ten, that he could eat very little breakfast, and would not take the second slice of bread which mother wanted to put in his pocket.

Things had gone on pretty well on the road to Middleton. He and Albert, and

little Sarah Elson, who had gone with her father for a treat, had enjoyed the walk well enough, and there was no time for feeling hungry. But the fat beast had gone the wrong way in Middleton, and the butcher's man grew angry, and that made Joe Elson cross, and he blamed Charlie, when Charlie felt he did not deserve it. And then came back the recollection of the penny in the mug, which mother told him he was to keep till New Year's Day, as he had made up his mind to do at first; and instead of Aunt Peacham being at home, and giving them some lardy-cake, the door was shut and locked, and neighbour Barnett said she had gone out for the day to see her daughter at Enshaw!

So here were all pleasant expectations come to an end; and then Master Elson, who had had his half-pint at the Crown, couldn't understand what made the boys so anxious to go round by High Street, where the drinking-fountain was, and as he really had to be home as quick as possible, he

called them on towards the toll-gate, and set off at a sharp pace for Cholderham. Little Sarah, in spite of her new, heavy boots, kept up with father amazingly well; but Charlie was out of temper, and would not at first walk fast, and then he grew hungry and tired, and in spite of Joe Elson's calls and beckonings, fell so far behind, with little Albert, who would not leave him, that at the turn by Benson's farm, they parted altogether.

I am afraid Charlie Woodham said "Our Father" very hurriedly that morning when he got up. Indeed he was so irregular about going to school, partly from disliking it, and partly because he was often kept away to earn a penny for father, that he could not say it through at his best without a mistake; and the other little prayer for "the Holy Spirit," which the clergyman had taught them with great care, he could not repeat at all. Perhaps Charlie was thinking about school, and was beginning to wish he were a better boy, and more diligent and trustworthy.

At any rate, he was not pleased with himself, if he was displeased with Master Elson, and Aunt Peacham, and some other people besides; but just then he and Albert heard wheels, and a little donkey-cart overtook them, driven by a lame man, who got his living by going round to sell fish and oysters, and such like perishable goods.

Abel Harris, as his name was, was kind-hearted to all, and especially tender to the young. So he took up the boys for a lift, and made them as comfortable as he could, in a corner of his little cart. Then he began talking to them about Christmas, and he told them as plainly and feelingly as he could just the old story of Bethlehem, and the Royal Babe, till Albert had got it almost by heart, and even Charlie, who had heard and read it several times at school, began to see it in a new and brighter light. He forgot his troubles and disappointments, and when put down at grandmother's door, he really could not believe he was almost home from Middleton. Grandmother, too, was very

kind, and knowing that the poor boys had a hard time of it at home, she gave them a good hunk of bread-and-cheese a-piece, and a long draught of cold tea, and then sat them down by the fire, till it was close upon half-past four.

The boys were now revived, and the last mile home did not seem long. Besides, when they were about half-way there, they were overtaken by the clergyman's daughter, who took them to the parsonage, and gave them something to eat as they went home, and each a penny for Christmas. Everything seemed to be turning out well, and Charlie and Albert thought, after all, this would be a happy Christmas, in spite of father's illness, and the long walk to Middleton. They had a short walk together outside the parsonage gate, and then they went to Dame Jones' little shop, and got four little cakes for father out of Charlie's penny, Albert's being left to give to mother.

Thomas Woodham laid down his last number of Reynold's Miscellany to listen to

Albert's glowing account of the day's adventures. He was happy now that Charlie was happy, and Charlie was cleaning both their pairs of boots, ready for Sunday-school in the morning. He would have gone anyhow, though Christmas day was not Sunday; but to-morrow Miss Eleanor said she was coming to school to give them all a little book, so they must be there in good time.

Now what happened after this, and whether Charlie became more contented, and diligent, and trustworthy, and how long his father lived, and whether he, too, learned more of true Christmas joy in knowing Jesus to be his Saviour and friend, I cannot tell you. It is time for us to ring out our regular Christmas chimes, so I must conclude with a hearty FAREWELL TO YOU ALL.

THE END.



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